



NEWSBREAK

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What's New?

New Module in the *Guide to Implementation*— The Other 69 Percent: Fairly Rewarding the Performance of Teachers of Nontested Subjects and Grades

Providing performance-based incentives to teachers of nontested subjects or grades and special student populations can be challenging. The latest online resource from the Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) is a useful tool in addressing such challenges.

CECR introduces a new module on designing a performance-based compensation system for nontested subjects and grades in its *Guide to Implementation: Resources for Applied Practice*. The new module is

available online at <http://cecr.ed.gov/guides/other69Percent.pdf>, along with several guidebook modules on other educator compensation topics at <http://cecr.ed.gov/guides/compReform.cfm>.

The module discusses the challenges involved in designing measures of performance to identify and reward teachers of the following:

- Nontested subjects (e.g., art, music, physical education, foreign languages)
- Nontested grades (particularly prekindergarten to Grade 2 and high school)
- English language learners (ELLs)
- Students with disabilities

The module presents a number of ways that states and districts can include these teachers in alternative compensation as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each option including the following:

- Base bonuses on schoolwide performance.
- Implement a system in which noncore teachers are eligible for some, not all, of the individual performance incentives.

- Employ a program in which student test scores are not used to determine noncore teachers' eligibility for rewards.
- Adopt or create new student tests at the district or state level to assess teacher performance in the noncore subjects or currently untested grades.
- Base rewards of teachers of ELLs or students with disabilities on schoolwide achievement gains and observed evaluations of their own classroom performance.
- Consider using gains in English proficiency as an additional performance measure for teachers of ELLs.

The module also provides examples of state-level and district-level programs currently employing these strategies.

Hot Off the Press

Nothing But Praise for Duncan at Senate Hearing—*Education Week*, January 13, 2009.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/01/13/18duncan.h28.html>

President-elect Barack Obama's choice for Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, voiced his support for the Teacher Incentive Fund, stating that it was "one of the best things" that Secretary Spellings has done and that he would look to expand the program.

Florence School District 3 Employees Receive Incentives—SCnow.com, December 22, 2008.

http://www.scnow.com/scp/news/local/article/florence_school_district_3_employees_receive_incentives/24663/

Florence County presented performance incentive awards to 551 certified and noncertified staff under the district's Teacher Advancement Program. The Teacher Advancement Program provides ongoing applied professional growth, opportunities for multiple career paths, performance-based incentives, and instructional focused accountability for its staff.

Schools See Success in Merit Pay—*Rapid City Journal*, December 2, 2008.

<http://www.rapidcityjournal.com/articles/2008/12/02/news/local/doc493235e4a568b418184906.txt>

Rapid City, South Dakota, a district that chose not to participate in the statewide Teacher Incentive Fund program, indicated that the money required by the district was enough of a deterrent not to participate despite the documented increase in student achievement, teacher collaboration, and recruitment efforts in participating schools.

Grantee Spotlight: Orange County Public Schools Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF)

The Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant provides differentiated compensation for teachers and administrators in the top 10 high-needs OCPS secondary schools. The program rewards participation in leadership activities, teacher evaluation, and documented gains in student achievement. Teachers are assessed through formal observations and on the progress made on their individual professional development plans at the end of each school year.

TIF teachers and administrators also must fulfill professional development requirements to receive a performance-based reward. Each year, they can meet these requirements through participation in one of the following:

- WIDE World at the Harvard Graduate School of Education online course (<http://wideworld.pz.harvard.edu>)
- College Board AVID, Spring Board or Advanced Placement summer workshop (<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/prof-dev/workshops>)

The OCPS TIF professional development plan also includes mathematics and science coaches at each school to support classroom teachers.

The OCPS Office of Recruitment uses TIF in addition to regular district resources to recruit teachers; TIF grant funds support the recruiter position. The school district also partnered with the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association to help newly hired teachers relocate and to expand its Web-based recruitment efforts on Teachers-Teachers.com.

What need is the project trying to address?

The TIF program was designed to support the three lowest achieving high schools and their seven feeder middle schools, which employ approximately 1,004 teachers and 36 administrators. OCPS is the 11th largest school district in the country and the fourth largest in the state of Florida. The district serves a primarily minority student population. Thirty-five percent of students are white; 27 percent are black; 30 percent are Hispanic; 4 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander; and approximately 3 percent represent other racial backgrounds. Furthermore, students face high levels of poverty; 53 percent to 90 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

What are the goals of the project?

There are three main objectives for TIF:

- Recruit, attract, and retain effective, highly qualified teachers and administrators for targeted schools through implementation of a sustainable differentiated compensation system based on improvements in student achievement.

- Increase the number of teachers and administrators participating in high-quality, research-based, and effective staff development to improve their content knowledge and pedagogical skills.
- Improve student achievement in mathematics and science in the targeted high-needs schools through offering professional development and on-site coaching/mentoring to teachers in these hard-to-staff subject areas.

How much are the incentives?

TIF incentives are tied to student achievement, rewarding individual successes for effective leading, teaching, and student learning. Incentive pay will be awarded annually to teachers (up to \$4,000 per year) and administrators (up to \$5,000 per year) based on the level of student achievement growth attained. Student achievement is based on the teacher's IPDP.

What are the recent highlights of the project?

As of fall 2008, 479 teachers and 28 administrators received incentive fund dollars for the first year of the TIF grant—totaling \$1,965,000. In addition, more than 600 teachers from the 10 participating schools enrolled in professional development courses as a prerequisite for inclusion in the TIF project in Orange County Public Schools. The goal for the second year is to increase the number of teachers and administrators participating in the TIF grant.

Contact Us

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The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) was awarded to Westat—in partnership with Learning Point Associates, Synergy Enterprises Inc., Vanderbilt University, and the University of Wisconsin—by the U.S. Department of Education in October 2006.

The primary purpose of CECR is to support the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees with their implementation efforts through the provision of ongoing technical assistance and the development and dissemination of timely resources. CECR also is charged with raising national awareness of alternative and effective strategies for educator compensation through this newsletter, a Web-based clearinghouse, and other outreach activities. We look forward to an exciting partnership with the TIF grantees as we embark together on blazing a new path for education reform.

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